



History & New Education Policy

Shruti Dilipkumar Lad¹, Dr. Mubaraq Qureshi²

Taywade College Mahadula Koradi, Nagpur Maharashtra

Corresponding Author - Shruti Dilipkumar Lad

Email: palekarm08@gmail.com

DOI- 10.5281/zenodo.11654359

Abstract:

In-depth analysis of the development of Indian education from antiquity to the present is provided in this study work. The New Education Policy (NEP), which was established in 2020, is also critically examined in terms of its main features and ramifications. The goal of the research is to evaluate the possible effects of the NEP on education in India going forward and to present a thorough grasp of how historical circumstances have produced the current educational landscape.

Keywords- *Antiquity, established ramifications, grasp, evaluate*

Introduction

Over thousands of years, India's educational history has developed into a rich tapestry that reflects the subcontinent's unique cultural, religious, and social fabric. In ancient India, education was intricately linked to the country's sociological, religious, and philosophical systems. The subcontinent's educational landscape was significantly shaped by the ancient Indian emphasis on traditional institutions like Nalanda and Gurukuls. These establishments had a crucial role in the dissemination of knowledge, ethics, and abilities, augmenting the area's cognitive and artistic legacy. This evolution has led resulted in the creation of several branches within the education system's development.

A brief history of India's education system The Gurukul was India's first system of education. It was a residential schooling system dating back to around 5000 BC where she Shishya (student) and Guru (teacher) used to reside in the guru's ashram (home) or in close proximity. This allowed for an emotional bond to be developed prior to the transmission of knowledge. The mode of communication was the ancient Sanskrit language. The basis of learning was not only to read book and memorise information, but also incorporate the holistic development of a child. This includes their mental, cognitive, physical, and spiritual wellness. Subjects taught were religious holy scriptures, medicine, philosophy, warfare, statecraft, astrology and more. The emphasis was on developing student's human values such as self-resilience, empathy, creativity plus strong moral and ethical behaviours. The aim was this knowledge could later be practically implemented to find solutions to real life problems.

The Ministry of Education in India has implemented three pivotal education policies since

then in the years 1968, 1986, and 2020, with the most recent one being spearheaded by the Modi Government. The New Education Policy (NEP) of India, introduced in 2020, marked a significant paradigm shift in the country's approach to education. After three decades, the NEP replaced the National Policy on Education (NPE) of 1986. Notably, this latest policy introduces a departure from the traditional 10+2 education structure, opting for a more comprehensive 5+3+3+4 approach. This strategic shift is a significant reform aimed at enhancing the educational framework in the country.

The NEP 2023 marks a pivotal milestone in the nation's educational journey. The policy was released on July 29, 2020, after approval by the Union Cabinet. The primary aim of NEP 2020 is to make education more accessible from primary to secondary levels by the year 2030, fostering a strong connection between learners and society. At the core of the New Education Policy (NEP) 2020 lie five fundamental principles: Access, Equity, Quality, Affordability, and Accountability. These pillars reflect a commitment to creating an inclusive and high-quality education system that is accessible to all, irrespective of socio-economic backgrounds. The NEP 2020 is designed to prepare the younger generation to confront the multifaceted challenges both on a national and global scale.

NEP 2023 introduces coding skills as an essential component of the curriculum including coding skills in national education policy 2023 lines with the global emphasis on digital literacy and equips students with valuable skills for future career prospects. The NEP 2030 promotes holistic development by integrating co-curricular activities, sports, arts, and vocational education into the curriculum. It recognizes that education extends beyond academics and aims to nurture well-rounded individuals.

As part of this paradigm shift, the educational stages have been redefined, starting with three years of preschool or Anganwadi education followed by two years of primary classes (1, 2). This restructuring emphasizes the adoption of play-based or activity-based teaching methods and places a significant focus on developing language skills during these formative years. The implementation of the NEP is a comprehensive effort to restructure and revitalize the education system to meet the evolving needs of the 21st century

Historical Evolution of Education in India

Ancient and Medieval Period:

During this period, the main source of knowledge in India and neighbouring countries were the Gurukuls and the method was known as Guru-Shishya Parampara.

- **Overview:**

The Gurukul system was a distinctive educational model that was popular in the ancient and medieval eras. It was distinguished by a tight teacher-student relationship and an all-encompassing approach to learning. The function of the guru, or instructor, was crucial in molding the students' intelligence and character. Residential schools known as "gurukuls" had pupils living with their gurus. Education was not limited to traditional classroom settings; it also included encounters with everyday life and the environment. Study of the Vedas, Upanishads, philosophy, arithmetic, astronomy, arts, and several sciences were all included in the curriculum. It focused on a person's whole growth, including their mental, physical, and spiritual development. Gurukuls placed a strong emphasis on experiential learning via dialogue, argument, and real-world application. The system gave more weight to hands-on learning than rote memorizing.

- **Role of Nalanda and Takshashila in Ancient Education:**

- **Nalanda:**

Nalanda, established in the 5th century CE in present-day Bihar, was one of the world's first residential universities and a symbol of India's intellectual prowess. It attracted scholars and students from across Asia, contributing to the exchange of knowledge in diverse fields such as philosophy, theology, mathematics, medicine, and the arts. Nalanda's library was renowned for its vast collection of manuscripts, making it a center for scholarly pursuits.

- **Takshashila:**

Takshashila, an ancient center of learning, was situated in present-day Pakistan. It is mentioned in ancient Indian and Greek texts. It played a crucial role in disseminating knowledge, especially in fields like political science, medicine, astronomy, and military strategy. Takshashila, like

Nalanda, attracted students and scholars from various parts of the world.

Colonial Period:

- **Impact of British Colonization on the Indian Education System:**

- **Macaulay's Minute (1835):**

The British East India Company's colonization significantly impacted the Indian education system. Lord Macaulay's Minute in 1835 advocated the promotion of English education at the expense of traditional Indian languages and cultures. This policy aimed to create a class of anglicized Indians who could serve as intermediaries in the colonial administration. The focus shifted from traditional Indian systems to Western-style education.

- **Introduction of Western-Style Education:**

The British introduced a formal system of education with an emphasis on English language and literature. Schools and colleges were established to cater to the needs of the British administration and to create a class of Indians familiar with Western ideas and values.

Post-Independence Era:

- **Educational Reforms Post-1947:**

- **Founding of the Republic (1947):**

After gaining independence in 1947, India embarked on a journey of educational reforms to address socio-economic disparities and promote inclusive growth. The government recognized education as a fundamental right, and efforts were made to expand access to education at all levels.

- **Key Policies and Reforms:**

The first National Policy on Education was formulated in 1968, followed by subsequent revisions in 1986 and 1992. These policies aimed at achieving universal access to education, improving quality, and promoting a national system of education. The Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) was launched in 2001 to ensure universal elementary education.

- **Role of Key Committees and Commissions:**

- **Kothari Commission (1964-66):**

The Kothari Commission was instrumental in shaping the education policy of the 1960s. It recommended the establishment of a national system of education and the introduction of a 10+2+3 structure. Emphasis was placed on vocationalization of education and a flexible curriculum.

- **Radhakrishnan Commission (1948-1951):**

The Radhakrishnan Commission played a significant role in formulating the educational policies of independent India. It emphasized the importance of integrating traditional Indian values with modern education. The commission's recommendations influenced the early post-independence educational landscape.

○ **National Education Policy (NEP) 1986 and 1992:**

The National Education Policy of 1986 aimed at promoting a national system of education and addressing issues of access, equity, and quality. The NEP of 1992 further emphasized the need for decentralization, community participation, and the introduction of vocational education.

The post-independence era witnessed a series of educational reforms aimed at democratizing education, ensuring equal opportunities, and aligning the system with the socio-economic goals of the nation. The role of committees and commissions has been crucial in shaping the trajectory of education in India during this period.

New Education Policy (NEP) of 2020:

• **Key Features:**

Holistic Development of Students:

The NEP aims to foster the holistic development of students, emphasizing not only academic excellence but also their physical, emotional, and ethical growth. The goal is to produce well-rounded individuals capable of navigating diverse challenges in life.

Flexibility and Integration of Subjects:

The policy advocates for a flexible and multidisciplinary approach to education, encouraging students to explore a wide range of subjects. It seeks to break down traditional silos and promote integration between different domains of knowledge.

Global Exposure and Skill Development:

Recognizing the importance of global competence, the NEP focuses on providing students with exposure to international perspectives. It also places a strong emphasis on skill development, aiming to equip students with practical skills relevant to the dynamic demands of the 21st-century workforce.

• **Structural Changes:**

Shift from 10+2 to 5+3+3+4 Structure;

The NEP proposes a structural shift in the school education system, moving away from the conventional 10+2 system to a more holistic 5+3+3+4 structure. This reorganization reflects an understanding of the developmental stages of children and aims to provide a more seamless and continuous learning experience.

Introduction of Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE):

The policy recognizes the importance of early childhood education and introduces Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) for children in the age group of 3 to 6 years. This initiative aims to provide a strong foundation for future learning and development.

Integration of Vocational Education from the School Level:

The NEP emphasizes the integration of vocational education from the school level onwards. This is designed to bridge the gap between academic learning and real-world skills, providing students with practical knowledge and enhancing their employability.

• **Language and Multilingualism:**

Emphasis on Mother Tongue as the Medium of Instruction:

The policy advocates for the use of the mother tongue or regional language as the medium of instruction at least until Grade 5 and preferably until Grade 8. This approach is seen as crucial for effective learning, especially in the early years of education.

Promoting Multilingualism and Language Flexibility:

Multilingualism is encouraged, and the NEP envisions a flexible language policy that allows students to learn multiple languages, including classical languages. This promotes linguistic diversity and a deeper understanding of diverse cultures.

Higher Education Reforms:

Changes in the Structure of Higher Education:

The NEP introduces changes in the structure of higher education, including the restructuring of undergraduate programs, the introduction of a four-year multidisciplinary Bachelor's program with exit options, and the integration of research into undergraduate education.

Emphasis on Research and Innovation:

The policy places a strong emphasis on research and innovation in higher education. It encourages universities to become hubs of cutting-edge research, fostering a culture of inquiry and discovery. The aim is to align higher education with global standards and promote innovation as a driver of economic and social development.

Challenges and opportunities of NEP 2020:

• **Implementation Challenges:**

Resource Constraints and Infrastructure Issues:

Implementing the ambitious goals of the NEP may be hindered by resource constraints, including financial limitations and inadequate infrastructure. Upgrading facilities, providing technology, and ensuring teacher training require substantial investments.

Mobilizing resources through public-private partnerships, international collaborations, and innovative funding models can help overcome financial limitations. Strategic planning and phased implementation can address infrastructure challenges.

Resistance to Change from Traditional Systems:

The NEP calls for a departure from traditional educational approaches, which may face resistance from stakeholders accustomed to existing systems. Traditional practices deeply ingrained in the education system may pose obstacles to swift implementation.

Sensitizing stakeholders through awareness campaigns, involving them in the policy-making process, and showcasing successful pilot programs can help build support for the changes proposed in the NEP.

- **Socio-economic Impact:**

Addressing Educational Disparities among Different Socio-economic Groups:

Socio-economic disparities in access to quality education persist, with marginalized communities facing barriers such as lack of infrastructure, inadequate teaching resources, and socio-cultural factors.

Implementing targeted interventions, affirmative action policies, and community engagement programs can address these disparities. Ensuring equal access to quality education for all is crucial for social cohesion and economic development.

Enhancing Access to Quality Education:

Despite progress, issues related to access to quality education remain, particularly in remote and economically disadvantaged areas. Ensuring equitable distribution of educational resources and opportunities is a persistent challenge.

Implementing inclusive policies, leveraging technology for remote education, and prioritizing resource allocation to underserved areas can enhance access to quality education. Community involvement and partnerships can also play a significant role in addressing this challenge.

- **Global Competitiveness:**

Assessing the NEP's Potential Impact on India's Global Competitiveness:

The success of the NEP in enhancing India's global competitiveness will depend on its effective implementation, adaptation to changing global demands, and the ability to produce graduates with skills aligned with international standards.

Establishing partnerships with reputed international institutions, aligning curriculum with global benchmarks, and promoting research collaborations can contribute to India's standing in the global education landscape.

Comparison with International Education Policies:

Assessing the NEP's effectiveness requires benchmarking against international education policies, which can be complex due to diverse global contexts and objectives.

Engaging in international collaborations, participating in global educational forums, and

conducting regular evaluations and research can facilitate a nuanced comparison. Learning from successful global models and adapting best practices to the Indian context can enhance the effectiveness of the NEP.

Conclusion:

In tracing the historical evolution of education in India, it is evident that the subcontinent has a rich and diverse educational heritage. From the Gurukul system and centres of learning like Nalanda and Takshashila in ancient times to the impact of British colonization and subsequent post-independence reforms, the trajectory of Indian education reflects a dynamic interplay of indigenous traditions and external influences. The colonial period witnessed a shift towards Western-style education, leading to a complex amalgamation of traditional and modern elements. Post-independence reforms aimed to address socio-economic disparities, with key committees and commissions shaping the contours of the education system.

The New Education Policy of 2020 represents a transformative vision for education in India. Its key objectives, including holistic development, flexibility, global exposure, and skill development, reflect a contemporary understanding of the needs of students in the 21st century. Structural changes, such as the shift to a 5+3+3+4 structure, introduction of Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE), and integration of vocational education, signal a departure from traditional models. Language and multilingualism, along with higher education reforms emphasizing research and innovation, add further dimensions to the NEP. The potential impact of these changes extends to the socio-economic landscape and global competitiveness, positioning India for a more inclusive and dynamic future.

References:

1. Aithal, P. S.; Aithal, Shubhrajyotsna (2019). "Analysis of Higher Education in Indian National Education Policy Proposal 2019 and Its Implementation Challenges". *International Journal of Applied Engineering and Management Letters*. 3 (2): 1–35.
2. Nandini, ed. (29 July 2020). "New Education Policy 2020 Highlights: School and higher education to see major changes". *Hindustan Times*.
3. Jebaraj, Priscilla (2 August 2020). "The Hindu Explains | What has the National Education Policy 2020 proposed?". *The Hindu*.
4. Krishna, Atul (29 July 2020). "NEP 2020 Highlights: School And Higher Education". *NDTV*.
5. Naidu, M. Venkaiah (8 August 2020). "The New Education Policy 2020 is set to be a landmark in India's history of education". *Times of India Blog*.